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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 THE HAGUE 001378

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [PINR](#) [KCRM](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [NL](#)
SUBJECT: DUTCH CT COORDINATOR REITERATES CONCERN OVER
RADICALIZATION

REF: A. A) THE HAGUE 1314

[B. B\) THE HAGUE 488](#)

[C. C\) THE HAGUE 368](#)

Classified By: Global Issues Chief Susan Garro for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY. National Counter Terrorism Coordinator Tjibbe Joustra told the Ambassador June 9 that he was seriously concerned about Islamist radicalization, through both the Internet and a handful of problematic mosques; he said radicalization now seemed to be moving at a faster pace, in particular among young Dutch Muslims. He noted that the June 6 terrorism threat progress report had maintained the threat level for the Netherlands at "substantial," where it has been since June 2005. Joustra's comments echoed the June 7 threat report, which emphasized radicalization, especially the growing influence of the Salafist movement, as a key factor in the overall threat situation in the Netherlands. Joustra said he believed the Dutch CT structure was now on a par with that of other EU member states. END SUMMARY.

Worried about Radicalization

[1](#)2. (C) During their June 9 meeting, National CT Coordinator Joustra and Ambassador Arnall discussed the terrorist threat situation in the Netherlands and the government's responses to it, and security for Aayan Hirsi Ali (Ref A). Joustra said that the overall threat situation had not changed significantly in the past year; he noted that the threat rating had been at "substantial" since June 2005. This rating, he said, indicated that there was real potential for a terrorist attack, but no concrete information that a specific attack was imminent. ("Substantial" is the second highest of four threat levels.) He added that in some respects, things were "quieter" this year than they were at the same time last year, partly as a result of the arrests of additional members of the Hofstad group in October 2005. Joustra indicated that continuing concern about radicalization was a significant factor in the government's terrorism threat analysis, stating that, "the whole process of radicalization is really worrying me." This was taking place at a faster pace than previously. He said the geographic spread was also widening; the appeal of Jihad ideology in the Netherlands had initially been concentrated primarily in the southeast, in particular in Eindhoven in Brabant province, but had since "migrated" east and north.

[1](#)3. (C) Joustra said that both the Internet and radical

mosques had a role in radicalization. Regarding the Internet, he said the number of radical sites, based in the Netherlands and elsewhere, had increased significantly. There was a need for more moderate sites, he said, and the government was looking for mechanisms to support such sites. Regarding radical mosques, he said the government monitored the activities of several "problematic" mosques, including one in the Hague. He added that there were four radical imams in particular he would like to be able to "get rid of;" however, as some had Dutch citizenship, deportation was not an option. He did not further identify the imams. (NOTE. The GONL deported three Eindhoven-based foreign imams in 2005 on the grounds that they advocated anti-Western violence and were a threat to national security; ref C. END NOTE.) Joustra noted that he was particularly concerned about radical Islamists among the Bosnian community in the Netherlands. He also expressed concern about the increasing tendency for Islamist radicals to use Dutch to communicate with young Dutch Muslims, many of whom do not speak Arabic.

Dutch Progress on CT

14. (C) Referring more broadly to Dutch efforts to establish an effective counter terrorism organizational structure, Joustra expressed satisfaction with progress to date. He noted that the staff of the Office of the National Counter Terrorism Coordinator (NCTB), which he heads, had been kept intentionally small, at 100. A larger staff would require "finding projects to keep them busy," he said, adding that he was "not dissatisfied with NCTB's effectiveness." He stated that in a relatively short period (i.e., since NCTB began operations in January 2005), the Dutch had put in place a CT structure that was on par with that of its EU partners. Noting that the EU does not have an operational role in

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counter terrorism, he stated that bilateral contacts with other EU member states were increasingly important. However, some member states have not established an equivalent CT Coordinator position.

15. (SBU) Joustra said he welcomed close cooperation with the United States. He said his February 2006 visit to Washington and New York had been very successful, and he expected to build on that visit to deepen bilateral CT cooperation. He said he had been particularly impressed with New York City's initiatives to engage the private sector in the CT effort, adding that he hoped to apply some of those ideas in the Netherlands.

Terrorism Threat Progress Report

16. (SBU) Joustra's comments on radicalization tracked closely with the conclusions of the fourth semi-annual Terrorism Threat Progress report. The report, submitted to Parliament June 7 by Justice Minister Donner and Interior Minister Remkes, is drafted by NCTB. The report highlighted the continuing rapid spread of Jihad ideologies through the Internet, as well as the prominent role of the Netherlands in Iraq and Afghanistan, as key factors in the threat situation in the Netherlands. The report also warned that "controversial debates" about Islam in the Netherlands could lead to a deterioration in the threat situation. The report also notes that some radical Islamic networks in the Netherlands are increasing their international orientation.

17. (U) The report stated that ultra-orthodox and radical Islamist movements, such as the Salafist movement, were rapidly gaining influence in the Netherlands. The increasing use of Dutch among Salafist radicals to reach non-Arabic speaking Dutch Muslim youth, was flagged as a worrying development. According to the report, Salafist groups are trying to influence the ideology, and even to "take over,"

some moderate mosques. Embassy contact Ayhan Tonca, chair of the Contact Group for Muslims and Government (CMO), the principal government advisor on Muslim issues, told the press that he was surprised by the report's emphasis on Salafism. He reportedly said that "Salafists are everywhere," including the Netherlands, but it was his impression that the movement had little support in the country. He said he had not seen signs that any of the 350 mosques affiliated with the CMO had been "taken over" by radical Muslims. The CMO claims to represent 80% of the Muslim population in the Netherlands.

18. (U) On the positive side, the report stressed the increasing preparedness by Muslim communities in the country to combat radicalization and recruitment. Additionally, more local governments -- beyond the four largest cities -- have taken measures to counter radicalization and promote Muslim integration. The report notes that the number of police reports about individuals believed to be undergoing radicalization has remained stable. It also noted that there have been increasing reports of radicalization among members of the defense forces, but noted that this could be due to greater alertness to the issue, rather than to increased radicalization.

19. (C) COMMENT. Joustra's comments on radicalization, and the Threat Progress report, are consistent with concerns raised by NCTB publicly and privately over the past six months: the government remains seriously concerned by the threat posed by Dutch Islamist radical groups, and focussed on developing effective mechanisms to counter the threat.
END COMMENT
ARNALL